18th October 1927]

A.—(*a*) & (*b*) The report has been received and is placed on the table.

Mappillas connected with the Malabar rebellion confined—

		No.	
(i) in Indian jails ...	...	5,339	convicts
	and	167	State prisoners.
(ii) in the Andamans	...	1,127	convicts.

Hindu prisoners connected with the rebellion confined—

(i) in Indian jails ...	...	51	„
(ii) in the Andamans	...	5	„

Budget

Action taken on the token cuts passed during the last budget debates.

*520 *Q.*—Mr. J. A. SALDANHA: Will the hon. the Law Member, the hon. the Member for Revenue, the hon. the Minister for Public Health and the hon. the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government be pleased to place before the Council a statement showing the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government on the several token cuts passed during the last budget debates with a view to recommending action to be taken by Government?

A.—A statement is laid on the table.[a]

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA:—"With reference to the detailed answers given in the appendix, I want to know whether the questions of pay, allowance, leave, provident fund, etc., were not raised in this House for discussion and investigation by a committee?"

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS:—"Which is the item?"

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA:—"The first item, 5-a. Land Revenue."

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS:—"Yes, the only question that remains is that they want more pay. The Government have answered in the negative. So there is no question for the committee."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO:—"May I know, Sir, with reference to the answer given in the appendix with regard to the Revenue Settlement Bill, what steps the Local Government have taken to give effect to the desire of this House, whether they have referred it to the Government of India and whether they have expressed any opinion on the subject? If so, what opinion have they expressed and when did they refer the matter to the Government of India? Within what possible time may we hope the Bill to be brought forward before this House?" 11-30 a.m.

The hon. Mr. N. E. MARJORIBANKS:—"I do not quite follow the hon. Member's questions on the subject. I think the position was, in regard

[a] Vide Appendix II on page 132 infra.

[18th October 1927

to this Bill, fully discussed at the last Budget meeting and I quoted in this House a press communiqué in extenso at the time. I do not know what the hon. Member wants to know further."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" It is said ' it is not open to the Local Government to bring in a Revenue Settlement Bill giving the power to Legislative Councils to fix the rates of land assessment'. Is it not open to them, Sir, to make a recommendation that this power should be granted to the Legislative Council, and is it not open to them, Sir, to bring in a Bill with that recommendation made a part of the Bill ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" No, Sir "

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" Again, Sir, with regard to the question of provincial autonomy, a reply is given that it is beyond the province of this particular Local Government. What steps again did the Government take with regard to the fulfilment of the desire of this House ; did they make any recommendations on the subject to the Government of India or to the Secretary of State ; if they have made any, what recommendation did they make, and if they have not made any recommendation, whether they have forwarded the discussion in this House for the information of the higher authorities concerned ? "

The hon. Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks :—" For the last part of the question, I should like to have notice. But as regards the first part, no recommendation of any kind has been made."

Mr. S. Satyamurti :—" With regard to 6. a. Excise, may I ask the hon. the Minister for Excise to state the reasons why no decision has yet been made on the question of the introduction of total prohibition, when he expects to be in a position to make up his mind with regard to this question, and whether the statements in his public speeches that he is for prohibition and that he is going to try it in two districts is merely his personal opinion and does not commit the Government of which he happens to be a member ? "

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar :—" The question, Sir, is still under the consideration of the Government."

Mr S. Satyamurti :—" That is not the answer I want, Sir. That answer is already given on the paper. I am asking (1) the reasons for the delay in the Government coming to a conclusion on this matter, (2) when the Government expect to be in a position to come to a conclusion on this matter, and (3) whether his public pronouncements saying that he is convinced of the necessity for total prohibition at least for economic reasons and that he will try it in two districts are purely personal opinions and does not commit the Government of which he happens to be a Member ? "

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar :—" Obviously, Sir, the question is so complicated that it will take time to arrive at a decision. There are various aspects of the matter, and, as I said, we have not come to a decision on the matter."

Mr. S. Satyamurti's name was then called.

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" May I know from the hon. Member for Excise . . . ? "

18th October 1927]

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Order, order. The hon. Member will please resume his seat. I need not remind hon. Members that when they want to put supplementary questions they should get up, and then when an hon. Member's name is called, he should put his supplementary question. I call upon Mr. Satyamurti."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know when the Government hope to be in a position to come to a decision on this matter? And one last point I want to know from the hon. the Minister for Excise—I would not rise again to ask it, Sir, is whether his statements made in public and reported in the public press of Madras that he is now convinced of the need for total prohibition, if not for any other reason at least for economic reasons, are only his personal opinions and do not commit the Government of which he happens to be a Member just now."

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—" I have very little to add to what I said with reference to the last point. I think I may state that I cannot hold myself responsible for what appeared in newspaper reports. As a matter of fact, I had occasion to find that newspaper reporting in the mufassal is certainly not up to the mark, and in some cases I have been incorrectly reported. But, with reference to the statement made, that is certainly my personal opinion, and, as I said, the Government have not come to a decision on the matter. So what I said does not commit the Government till we come to a final decision."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" I am mystified, Sir. May I ask for some more light, as to whether under diarchy—I know its anomalies—such a thing is permissible for a Member of Government—I am not asking for an opinion, Sir. I am merely asking in what capacity he spoke when he spoke on this question of total prohibition with respect to the portfolio which is in his charge, in reply to addresses presented to him as a responsible Member of Government and not as Diwan Bahadur Arogyaswami Mudaliyar, Retired Superintending Engineer, but as the hon. Diwan Bahadur Arogyaswami Mudaliyar, the Third Minister to the Government of Madras; whether the answers given in his official capacity when going on tour at the expense of the tax-payer and the speeches made by him he considers only as his personal opinions, and whether those opinions were not given in his capacity as a responsible Minister of Government; and, secondly, whether he has taken any steps at that time or since to contradict the alleged misreported speeches in the Madras press, and whether he has sent any corrections denying the statements appearing in the press?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—" I do not think I have denied any statement I made. But I merely wished to remark that some of the statements made in the press are not exactly correct. But, apart from that, so long as Government have not arrived at any decision, such remarks as I have made are merely indications of my own personal opinion. As to the question whether I am taking any action on the matter, I have been taking action, and, as I said, the question is under consideration."

[18th October 1927

Rao Bahadur C. S. Ratnasabhapati Mudaliyar :—" May I know whether the hon. the Minister was justified in saying so, in view of the fact that a resolution on excise policy had been already accepted by the vote of the Legislative Council ? "

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar :—" I am not aware of any resolution on the excise policy accepted by this Council."

Rao Bahadur C. S. Ratnasabhapati Mudaliyar :—" Will he kindly refer to the Government records and find it out, and give me an answer to-morrow or the day after? It is a wonder to me that the Excise Minister is not aware of the resolution."

The hon. the President :—" The hon. Member is expected to put his questions but not to express his wonder to the House."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—" May I know from the hon. the Minister for Excise what exactly are the aspects of the question that are now under consideration, how far the consideration has proceeded, how long he will take to come to a conclusion, whether any conclusions have been arrived at at all on any of the aspects that are under consideration, and whether he can give us the least light to know what exactly is happening within his chambers ? "

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar :—" I am afraid I am not in a position to say what is exactly happening now. As I said in general terms, we have not been keeping quiet."

Mr. S. Satyamurti :—" May I ask one question, Sir ? I am now reading with your leave from a speech of the hon. the Minister for Excise made in this House. That speech must be taken as representing what he commits the Government to, unless these men (pointing to the official reporters' gallery) are considered incompetent. He said, 'Prohibition will be the goal of our excise policy.' That is the Government's, I think, when he spoke of 'our excise policy'. 'The ideal of a dry Presidency will be accepted and worked up to. For the future, our policy will be the further reduction of shops and consumption by extension of the prohibition areas by such increase of duty on spirits and of tree-tax as is found suitable, by the reduction of the limits of private possession wherever necessary, and by such other methods as may be found possible. . . . . It is my intention to accept and carry out the policy of prohibition in such definite and progressive stages as enquiry and the circumstances of the case prove to be suitable.' Now, contrast that with the statement made here in the Appendix that 'no decision has yet been made on the question of the introduction of total prohibition.' May I ask, Sir, for light as to how the hon. the Minister for Excise reconciles that statement of his where he says that 'prohibition will be the goal of our policy ; the ideal of a dry Presidency will be accepted and worked up to ; it is my intention to accept and carry out the policy'; whether that statement also was made in his personal capacity and not as a responsible Member of Government; and whether we should take the statement that no decision on the question has been arrived at or the earlier statement that prohibition is the goal of the policy of the Government ? I wish to have some light, Sir "

18th October 1927]

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"I am afraid it is passing the limits of putting supplementary questions, when a Member wants to contradict one statement of one of the Members of the Treasury Bench as against another statement in his official capacity. That is really assuming the role of debate, and I think such a process is not admissible in the case of supplementary questions."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"I respectfully agree with you, Sir. But I am not referring to any speech made outside the House."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"Even with regard to statements made in the House, I have come to the conclusion that it is cross-examination, and it is not permissible."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"May I ask the hon. the Minister for Excise which is the present opinion of the Government; is it the statement made on the budget debate, or the statement that the Government have not come to any decision on the question of prohibition? I want an answer to that, yes or no. Which is the correct statement of the policy of the Government on the matter?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—"I think the statement made in the budget debate is the correct statement, and I do not think I have said anything since to contradict that. I merely said that we have not come to any decision as to the exact methods."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"May I therefore ask, Sir, in view of his present answer, what his answer on the paper that no decision has yet been made on the question of prohibition means?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"It is again cross-examining."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"If you will allow me to make a statement, I am simply asking what that sentence in his answer means. I do not want to cross-examine him in any manner."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"I do not think it is permissible."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR:—"May I know whether the reduction motion referred to has been given effect to; if so, how it has been given effect to, and what was the effect of the reduction?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—"It is only Rs. 100 less money spent on the grant." (Laughter.)

Civil Justice

Communal representation in the establishment of the Judicial department, Guntur district.

* 521 Q.—Mr. J. KUPPUSWAMI: Will the hon. the Law Member and the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact—

(i) that the non-Brahman (Hindu) proportion in the grades Rs. 180—10—240, Rs. 125—5—150, Rs. 80—4—120 and Rs. 60—4—80 in the Judicial department in Guntur district has fallen to nil;